

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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SS-15 OPR-02 CCO-00 SSC-01 SCCT-01 ARA-06 SAJ-01 AS-01

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3879

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

S E C R E T LISBON 4825

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PO

SUBJ: CAPTAIN TOMAZ ROSA ON CURRENT SITUATION

REF: LISBON 4731 (NOTAL) DTG 201005Z AUG 75.

SUMMARY: CAPTAIN TOMAZ ROSA STATES THAT PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES HAD TOLD MELO ANTUNES TO SPEED PREPARATIONS FOR A NEW GOVERNMENT. CHANGE COULD OCCUR THIS WEEKEND (AUG 23-24). ANTUNES PLANNING ON INCLUDING PCP MINISTERS IN CABINET AS CONCILIATORY GESTURE. FABIAO TO BE PRIME MINISTER, MELO ANTUNES AND VICTORE CRESPO DEPUTY PRIME MINISTERS, OTELO SARAIVA DE CARVALHO CHIEF OF STAFF ARMED FORCES, AND VASCO LOURENCO TO BE CHIEF OF STAFF OF
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ARMY. SOCIALISTS AND PPD URGING TOMAZ ROSA AS MINISTER OF LABOR.

POSSIBLE ASSASSINATION PLOT AGAINST OTELO BY CUBAN COMMANDOS IS REPORTED. END SUMMARY.

1. CAPTAIN TOMAZ ROSA TOLD LABATT AUGUST 22 PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES HAS INSTRUCTED MELO ANTUNES TO SPEED PREPARATIONS FOR A NEW GOVERNMENT. ROSA ASSERTED THAT ANTUNES GROUP IS PRESSING FOR PROMPT DECISION BY PRESIDENT TO OUST PRIME MINISTER GONCALVES, WHICH COULD EVEN OCCUR YET TODAY (AUGUST 22) OR THIS WEEKEND. ANTUNES GROUP NOT DESIROUS OF DELAY WHICH WILL MEAN ADDITIONAL POPULAR RALLIES, SERGEANT'S PETITIONS, AND OTHER PRESSURES GENERATED BY THE PCP. AS AN EXAMPLE OF PRESSURES ON ANTUNES GROUP TO REACH A RECONCILIATION WITH PRO-PCP ELEMENTS" OF MILITARY, ROSA STATED THAT FOUR REPRESENTATIVES OF EACH FACTION HAVE AGRRED TO A MEETING SCHEDULED FOR 4:00 P.M. AUGUST 22. ROSA DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THERE IS MUCH LIKELIHOOD OF RECONCILIATION AS ANTUNES IS NOT INCLINED TO COMPROMISE AT THIS POINT.

2. ROSA ASSERTED THAT PRESENTTHINKING IS FOR GENERAL FABIAO TO TAKE OVER AS PRIMEMINISTER (MOSTLY IN NAME) WHILE MELO ANTUNES AND VICTOR CRESPO WILL BE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTERS. OTELO SARAIVA DE CARVALHO WILL BE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ARMED FORCES. VASCO LOURENCO WILL BE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ARMY. CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE NAVY PINHEIRO AZEVEDO WILL PROBABLY REMAIN UNCHANGED. CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE AIR FORCE MORAIS DA SILVA WILL BE REPLACED.

3. ROSA STATED THAT HE BELIEVES MOST MINISTERS FOR A NEW GOVERNMENT ARE ALREADY CHOSEN. MARIO SOARES MET WITH MELO ANTUNES AT 11:00 A.M. AUGUST 22 AND, AMONG OTHER NOMINATIONS, URGED THAT TOMAZ ROSA BE APPOINTED MINISTER OF LABOR. ANTUNES DEMURRED, SAYING THAT HE WISHED TO SAVE LABOR MINISTRY FOR A COMMUNIST PARTY NOMINEE. ROSA ASSERTS THAT HE PERSONALLY VETOED THIS PROPOSAL TO ANTUNES ON GROUNDS THAT LABOR MINISTRY IS TOO KEY A POSITION TO GIVE TO PCP AS A SOP. ROSA HIMSELF NOT UNWILLING FOR A PCP CANDIDATE TO HOLD A POSITION SUCH AS MINISTER OF SOCIAL WELFARE OR OF TRANSPORTATION (NOT COMMUNICATIONS) AS A CONCILIATORY GESTURE. PPD SECRETARY GENERAL GUERREIRO IS MEETING WITH ANTUNES AT 3:00 P.M. AUGUST 22 TO DISCUSS MINISTERIAL NOMINATIONS AND WILL ALSO URGE ROSA'S APPOINTMENT AS MINISTER OF LABOR. VASCO GONCALVES IS UNDER NO HYPOTHESIS TO BE RETAINED

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IN ANY MINISTERIAL POSITION.

4. ORIENTATION OF MILITARY UNITS: ROSA STATED THAT ANTUNES GROUP URGING MILITARY SUPPORTERS TO REMAIN IN "PREVENTIVE STATUS" THIS WEEKEND BUT NOT TO INITIATE OR TO BE DRAWN INTO ACTION. "IF ANY ACTION OCCURS, IT WILL BE INITIATED BY THEM, AN ELEVENTH OF MARCH IN REVERSE." AIR FORCE CHIEF OF STAFF MORAIS DA SILVA HAS GIVEN ORDERS TO THE EFFECT THAT AIR FORCE PLANES WILL NOT

TAKE OFF ON MISSIONS WITHOUT HIS PERSONAL CONSENT. ROSA IS UNHAPPY AT RECENT EFFORTS OF MORAIS DA SILVA TO KEEP A FOOT IN BOTH CAMPS. AS A CONSEQUENCE ROSA BELIEVES AIR FORCE PLANES WILL NOT PARTICIPATE ONE WAY OR THE OTHER IN ANY SHOWDOWN BY ARMS. HOWEVER, AIR FORCE SUPPORT FOR THE ANTUNES GROUP IS SUFFICIENT THAT SHOULD MORAIS DA SILVA GIVE ORDER FOR UNITS TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST PRO-ANTUNES UNITS OR PERSONNEL IN THE AIR FORCE, THESE ORDERS WOULD NOT BE OBEYED. REPORTED ANTI-ANTUNES PETITION BY AIR FORCE SERGEANTS REPRESENTS INITIATIVE BY SMALL GROUP AND IS NOT SIGNIFICANT.

5. ORIENTATION OF KEY MILITARY COMMANDERS: ROSA DESCRIBED THE NEWLY DESIGNATED COMMANDER OF THE NAVY'S CONTINENTAL MARINE FORCE, RIBEIRO PACHECO, AS POSSIBLY A PCP SYMPATHIZER IN HIS PERSONAL THINKING, BUT ALSO A PERSON WHO WOULD RIGOROUSLY COMPLY WITH MILITARY ORDERS. THEREFORE, AS LONG AS HE RECEIVED ORDERS FROM THE NAVY CHIEF OF STAFF, PINHEIRO AZEVEDO, PACHECO PRESENTS NO PROBLEM. SURPRISINGLY, ROSA DESCRIBED BRIGADIER CORVACHO, THE DISPLACED COMMANDER OF THE NORTHERN MILITARY REGION AS NOT A COMMUNIST BUT UNDULY SUBJECT TO THE INFLUENCE OF HIS FRENCH WIFE, A COMMUNIST PARTY MEMBER. ROSA SAID THAT CORVACHO MIGHT EVENTUALLY BE RESTORED TO THE COMMAND OF THE NORTHERN MILITARY REGION IF THE CURRENT INQUIRY OF HIS PERFORMANCE ABSOLVED HIS ACTIONS.

6. POSSIBLE ASSASSINATION PLOT AGAINST OTELO: ROSA STATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD WORD THAT TWO "FOREIGN" COMMANDOS HAD ARRIVED IN PORTUGAL AUGUST 21 WITH ORDERS TO ASSASSINATE GENERAL OTELO SARAIVA DE CARVALHO. LABATT SPECULATED THAT OTELO'S POSITION IS SUFFICIENTLY UNCLEAR THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO KNOW WHO WOULD WISH TO REMOVE HIM AT THIS POINT. ROSA SAID IT IS THOUGHT THE COMMANDOS ARE CUBANS, SENT BECAUSE OTELO'S DECISION TO AGREE TO A JOINT STATEMENT WITH THE ANTUNES GROUP IS REGARDED
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AS "TREASON" BY THE CUBANS. OVERALL ROSA BELIEVES OTELO IS IN A MUCH WEAKER POSITION THAN PREVIOUSLY AND IS AWARE OF CERTAIN EFFORTS THAT OTELO HAS MADE WITHIN THE MILITARY TO COUNTERACT THE IRRESPONSIBLE IMAGE HE CREATED FOR HIMSELF BY HIS "REACTIONARIES TO THE BULL RING" STATEMENTS FOLLOWING HIS RECENT RETURN FROM CUBA. (COMMENT: LOCAL PRESS AND RADIO HAVE CARRIED REPORTS THAT OTELO HAS RECEIVED THREATS FROM JAPANESE RED ARMY, WHICH CLAIMS TO HAVE PERSONNEL IN PORTUGAL).

7. COMMENT: "JORNAL NOVO" DIRECTOR ARTUR PORTELA FILHO TOLD AMBASSADOR EARLIER IN DAY THAT HE (PORTELA) UNDERSTOOD FROM "GOOD SOURCES" THAT FABIAO WOULD BE FIGUREHEAD PRIME MINISTER ONLY. REAL AUTHORITY WOULD BE IN HANDS OF MELO ANTUNES, BUT TO HAVE DESIGNATED MELO ANTUNES PRIME MINISTER AT OUTSET OF NEW GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE BEEN TOO ONE-SIDED A SETTLEMENT OF INTERNAL

AFM DIFFERENCES. SAME SOURCE SAID THERE WOULD BE NO COMMUNISTS
WITHIN THE NEW GOVERNMENT. THIS CONFLICTS WITH ROSA'S INFORMATION
AS WELL AS WHAT PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES TOLD AMBASSADOR EARLIER
IN DAY. PRESIDENT SAID THAT NEW GOVERNMENT MUST INCLUDE COMMUNISTS
TO AVOID OUTBREAK OF LABOR VIOLENCE IN LISBON/SETUBAL AREA.
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